



Testimony on H.B. 6195

May 19, 2010

Good morning. My name is Hollis Turnham. I am the Michigan State Director for the PHI-Michigan. We support H.B. 6195. The legislation secures the operations of the Michigan Quality Community Care Council (MQC3) that effectively serve elders and people living with disabilities and the in-home care providers who support them.

H.B. 6195 is good public policy

PHI, like many other organizations serving elders, people living with disabilities, and the interests of quality care, advocated for the creation of MQC3. We are extremely pleased with the entity's development and operations and believe that the 60,000+ people using Home Help services deserved the continuation of the services provided by MQC3.

MQC3 has brought sorely needed attention from policy makers, state agencies, in-home care agencies, and advocates of all kinds to the Home Help program. As the state Medicaid agency's program serving over 60,000 people a year, the Home Help program had been largely ignored or stripped of resources.

MQC3 has restored some opportunities for training of providers. MQC3 created some real choices for Home Help clients to find qualified, capable providers. MQC3 recruits and screens potential providers, gathering information about criminal backgrounds while supporting clients in selecting new staff.

Michigan is one of only 16 states in the country that funds a regional or statewide registry like MQC3 that "matches" Home Help client needs and preferences with qualified, capable providers seeking work. Missouri and Connecticut are the latest states considering or developing an MQC3 for their citizens using long-term care supports and services. [PHI will



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soon post information on its website www.phinational.org about all “matching registries” in the country.]

The employment support MQC3 provides to people seeking work as a Home Help provider is vitally important. In its projections for 2006-2016 occupational growth, the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Development estimates that jobs in the long-term care sector will grow 20.3%, a rate almost three times that for all jobs in the state of Michigan. All efforts to introduce and orient job seekers to Home Help provider positions are important and build a more stable workforce to serve elders and people living with disabilities. [Note: DELEG will be issuing new occupational growth projections for 2008 to 2018 this summer.]

Again, we support passage of HB 6195 and its efforts to secure future operations of MQC3.

Description of PHI

PHI works to improve the lives of people who need home or residential care—and of the workers who provide that care.

Our practical workplace and policy expertise helps consumers, workers and employers improve the quality of care, by creating better-quality direct-care jobs.

Our goal is to ensure caring, stable relationships between consumers and workers, so that both may live with dignity, respect and independence.

PHI (formerly known as the Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute) is a not-for-profit organization that works to strengthen the direct-care workforce within Michigan’s long-term care system. We are largely foundation funded, and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation of Flint is our largest Michigan funding resource.

Our work is grounded in the philosophy that **quality jobs** for direct-care workers will lead to **quality care** for long-term care consumers. While there are many factors that enhance a consumer’s definition quality, one key element is the consistent presence of a trained, compassionate caregiver. Many of these workers see their job as a calling, but many report that they can’t afford the work. Competitive wages and health insurance coverage are critical elements in attracting and sustaining a strong, qualified corps of direct-care workers, employed by the state’s 6,000 long-term care providers.